

Message Text

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44

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /058 W

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R 170738Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1741

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL MEDAN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 6700

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, ASEAN, MY

SUBJ: PREPARATIONS FOR ASEAN SUMMIT: COMMENTS BY MALAYSIAN OFFICIAL

REF: K.L. 6553

1. SENIOR OFFICIALS FROM ASEAN NATIONS MET IN KUALA LUMPUR NOV 11 AND 14 IN THE LATEST ROUND OF PREPARATIONS FOR LONG AWAITED ASEAN SUMMIT (LAST MEETING OF SENIOR OFFICIALS WAS HELD IN SINGAPORE IN SEPT). MFA SPOKESMAN (NOT NAMED IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS BUT IDENTIFIED IN VERNACULAR PRESS AS TAN SRI ZAITON, MFA SECRETARY GENERAL AND NUMBER TWO MAN AT MFA) TOLD REPORTERS NOV 11 BEFORE MEETINGS BEGAN THAT ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS WOULD MEET IN LATE DECEMBER IN PATTAYA, SOUTH OF BANGKOK, TO FINALIZE AGENDA FOR SUMMIT, NOW SCHEDULED TO TAKE PLACE IN BALI "EARLY NEXT YEAR." HE NOTED THAT FINAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS WOULD ALSO BE WORKING OUT DETAILS OF DRAFT BLUEPRINT WHICH SETS OUT DEFINITIONS, PRINCIPLES OF OPERATION, GUIDELINES AND STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE PROPOSED "ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY" IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. ASEAN

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SUMMIT -- FIRST SINCE ASEAN WAS CREATED EIGHT YEARS AGO --

ALSO WOULD REVIEW PROGRESS OF ASEAN TO DATE AND DISCUSS FUTURE DIRECTIONS, INCLUDING PROPOSALS FOR NEW AREAS OF COOPERATION, ACCORDING TO MFA SPOKESMAN.

2. ITEM IN NOV 14 "NEW STRAITS TIMES" (NST) CITED "CONFERENCE SOURCES" AS SAYING SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE DECIDED TO PUT ASIDE, AT LEAST FOR TIME BEING, PHILIPPINE PROPOSAL TO RAISE SOUTHEAST ASIAN NEUTRALIZATION SCHEME AT UNITED NATIONS. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT, PHILIPPINE SUGGESTION WAS "A BIT PREMATURE," AS, IT WAS CONTENDED, A MOVE IN THAT DIRECTION MIGHT RESULT IN OUTRIGHT REJECTION OF THE NEUTRALITY ZONE CONCEPT BY THE INDOCHINESE COUNTRIES WHICH ASEAN HOPED EVENTUALLY WOULD BE COVERED BY THE ZONE. HOWEVER, FILIPINO PROPOSAL FOR "A LIMITED CUSTOMS UNION WITH SELECTIVE TRADE LIBERALIZATION" MIGHT BE FORWARDED FOR ADOPTION AT THE ASEAN SUMMIT. SENIOR OFFICIALS ALSO REPORTEDLY DISCUSSED INDONESIAN PAPER ASSESSING POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION AFFECTING ASEAN MEMBERS, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON REGIONAL SECURITY, WHICH MIGHT INCLUDE POSSIBILITY OF EXTENDING A NETWORK OF BILATERAL SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS TO ALL ASEAN MEMBERS. RELATIONS BETWEEN ASEAN MEMBERS AND INDOCHINESE COUNTRIES ALSO WERE TOUCHED ON, NST ADDED.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH PRESS REPORTS INDICATED SENIOR OFFICIALS HAD FOUND AREAS OF AGREEMENT REGARDING PROPOSED BLUEPRINT FOR "ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY," MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS IN PRIVATE HAVE SPOKEN VERY CAUTIOUSLY ON SUBJECT, INDICATING MANY KEY DETAILS REMAIN TO BE RESOLVED BEFORE ASEAN LEADERS CAN ENDORSE SUCH A DOCUMENT AT THE LEVEL OF A SUMMIT CONFERENCE. IN THIS REGARD TAN SRI ZAITON TOLD ONE NEWSMAN IN PRIVATE A FEW DAYS AGO THAT ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS HAVE MET MANY TIMES AND "WILL MEET MANY TIMES MORE" BEFORE FINAL AGREEMENT ON THIS IS ACHIEVED, IN VIEW OF THE INHERENT COMPLEXITY OF THE MATTER.

UNDERHILL

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